

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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**KENNEDY URGES PRESIDENT BUSH NOT TO VETO CHIP**

*(As Prepared for Delivery)*

A measure of a great society is how it treats its children. The actions of Congress and the President over the coming days will determine whether we meet that test.

Today, there are still 9 million children without health insurance. That's not just wrong, it's outrageous – it is immoral.

We have a chance – even a duty – this week to make a difference for these children by expanding the Children's Health Insurance Program.

In Saint Luke's Gospel, we are told that Jesus instructed his disciples to "let the little children come unto me, and do not hinder them." We urge Congress and the President to support our bipartisan legislation and let little children have health care.

That is what these religious leaders and people of faith across America are saying today. They know these children. They've ministered to them. They've prayed for them. They've blessed them.

All children deserve a healthy start in life, and all parents deserve the peace of mind that they can take their children to the doctor if they're sick.

When children get the care they need, they do better academically, emotionally, physically and socially—this is an investment in their futures.

Quality health care for children isn't just a nice idea. It's not something we wish we could do. It's something we have to do and something we can do.

The President and Members of Congress have health insurance. Our children receive the best health care in the world. If it's good enough for the President and for Senators, surely it's good enough for poor children across our land.

The children of America need our care. They need our compassion. They need us to not shortchange their dreams but instead to give them the chance in life they deserve.

I urge President Bush to drop his veto threat and sign this bipartisan CHIP bill into law.

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